

Tom Horne
Superintendent

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ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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**AIMS SCORES RELEASED: SUPERINTENDENT HORNE PREDICTS
90 PERCENT PASSING RATE BY 2006**

PHOENIX (Tuesday, August 24, 2004) AIMS scores for 2004 released today show high school proficiency in reading and writing at approximately 60 percent, with math proficiency increasing from 36 percent in 2003 to 39 percent in 2004.

State Superintendent Tom Horne predicted that 90 percent of high school seniors should be proficient in all subjects by 2006, when proficiency will be a condition to graduation.

Horne stated: "The spring of 2004 was the first of five chances that the class of 2006 will have to obtain a score of proficiency, which will be required for graduation. We expect at least 90 percent of the students, who would otherwise graduate, will score proficient in all three subjects by 2006, for at least three reasons.

"First, Massachusetts and Florida have gone through a similar process, and each had over 90 percent proficiency. In Massachusetts, when they looked at the 10 percent who did not pass, almost all of the students had bad attendance records. This emphasizes to parents the importance of good attendance at school because the teachers are teaching the standards that are tested on AIMS.

"Second, teachers are reporting that the students subject to this graduation requirement are taking both the test and their studies much more seriously than did their older siblings (who had no such requirement). Interestingly, they report that the students' parents are also taking the studies more seriously, knowing that their children must pass the test to graduate.

"Third, we have an intensive state-wide program of intervention to help those students who did not pass the first round of tests. This includes a federal "flex" program, under which funds from Titles I through V can be redistributed, and schools must use a portion of those funds for AIMS intervention. Another example is \$4.5 million of funds appropriated by the state legislature that parents in underperforming schools can use for payment of tutors so the children will pass AIMS. With four more chances, and intervention for those students who did not pass the first time, I believe 90% will pass," Horne added.

A full set of AIMS results is available at www.ade.az.gov

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